DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 176 736 IR 007 679

AUTHOR	Nilsen, Alleen Pace; Tyler, Karen Beyard
TITLE	Promoting Educational Equity through School Libraries. Introduction and Module 1: Assumptions about "Male" and "Female."
INSTITUTION	Arizona St e Univ., Tempe.
SPONS AGENCY	Office of ducation (DHEW), Washington, D.C. Women's Educational Equity Act Program.
PUB DATE	78
NOTE	28p.; For related documents, see IR 007 677-683
AVAILABLE FROM	edc/weeap Distribution Center, 39 Chapel Street, Newton, Massachusetts 02160 (this item $0.50, complete set of materials $4.75. Checks should be made payable to: Education Development Center)
EDRS PRICE	MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	Equal Educatic; Inservice Programs; *Instructional Materials Centers; Librarians; Library Role; *Media Specialists; School Libraries; *Sex Differences; Sex Discrimination; *Sex Fairness; Sex Role; *Sex Stereotypes

ABSTRACT

Traditional ideas about differences between men and women are examined in this introductory learning module in a continuing education program for inservice school media specialists. The librarian's and media specialist's awareness of how false beliefs regarding sex roles are manifested is intended to provide background useful in the evaluation, selection, and acquisition of library materials that will promote sex fairness in their institutions. Based on the premise that unfair, inaccurate assumptions are unconsciously communicated through society's differing treatments of men and women, as well as through the repetition of images which define these treatments, the material addresses four major areas: (1) differences between males and females which are determined by sex, (2) ideas about maleness and femaleness which are inferred from sex-determined differences, (3) why such ideas are unfair to both sexes, and (4) ways in which such ideas are communicated. Six specific assumptions based on innate sex differences are stated, along with illustrations of how each is expressed through the media, how behavior is shaped to support the assumption, and reasons why the assumption is unfair or untrue. Tests and exercises to accompany this module are included in a separate activity book. (FM)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED176736

Promoting Educational Equity Through School Libraries

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

INTRODUCTION AND MODULE 1:

ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT "MALE" AND "FEMALE"

Alleen Pace Nilsen
Karen Beyard Tyler

Arizona State University

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Educ. Development Center/ WEEAP
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Women's Educational Equity Act Program
U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare
Office of Education

1978

IE007679

INTRODUCTION

Since 1965 and the passage of the Civil Rights Act, discrimination in employment on the basis of race, color, creed, and sex has been illegal. Title IX of Education Amendments of 1972 states:

> No person shall ... on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

If passed, the Equal Rights Amendment would add: "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any state on account of sex." The mandate to individuals and institutions is clear: every person must be allowed equal access to the benefits, rights, and opportunities available to any other person. Sex, like race, cannot be the basis for discriminating against or in favor of any person. With or without passage of the ERA, that is the law for public education.

Even before passage of Title IX, educators had become aware that their institutions often denied women access to opportunities (e.g., athletic scholarships, "boys" courses, admissions to medical school) and limited the career options and aspirations of both men and women. Boys and girls both learned to believe that certain careers and behaviors are appropriate for males and other careers and behaviors are appropriate for females.

One response to this problem was to offer women's studies courses in colleges and universities. These courses were an attempt to give fair emphasis to the historical and intellectual contributions of women and to identify strong role models for women. Another response to the problem was to develop and publish books and other materials to supplement the curriculum and compensate for the inadequacy and unfairness of traditional textbooks and courses of study. But, change has been slow. Boys and girls still learn that certain options are appropriate for males and other options are appropriate for females. And, while the newest materials have begun to expand the options for women, few have expanded the options for men.

Change has been slow because, despite production of new materials, few are actually used in the classroom. School finances permit textbook changes only every five or six years and the production of textbooks is a costly, long-term process. As a result, the majority of the new materials are in the form of individual books and audio-visual materials. These, if they are acquired by the schools at all, are most likely to become a part of the library media center collection. Consequently, librarians and media specialists can play the critical role in evaluating, selecting, and

acquiring materials which promote educational equity in the schools. They can also develop an awareness among school personnel and students that these materials are a necessary counterbalance and supplement to the school's curriculum.

To play this critical role and promote educational equity in the schools, librarians, media specialists, and others who select materials, should be able to answer the following questions:

First, what educational practices and procedures permit students to learn unfair or inaccurate ideas about the differences between males and females?

Second, what characteristics of the materials used in the schools communicate these unfair or inaccurate ideas?

Third, what positive characteristics of school materials can help counterbalance the unfair and inaccurate ideas communicated by traditional materials?

Fourth, what information sources should be available in media centers so that children, young people, and faculty can have access to complete, accurate, and unbiased information about both sexes?

Finally, how can school librarians encourage both faculty and students to use these "sex-fair" and supplemental materials?

The five modules included in "Promoting Educational Equity Through School Libraries" will familiarize you with the answers some educators have given to these questions. You will also be able to examine the commitment of your school and library to educational equity and to develop strategies for change appropriate for your school. Most importantly, you will own ideas about men, women, and the meaning of the term "educational equity."

MODULE 1: ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT "MALE" AND "FEMALE"

Introduction

Since no teacher decides to teach unfair or inaccurate ideas about the differences between males and females, many people find it difficult to accept the idea that students in school learn unfair and inaccurate ideas. This is because we unconsciously communicate our beliefs about differences between males and females. These beliefs are communicated in two ways. The first way is by treating males and females differently, at home and in the schools. The second is by permitting the repetition of images which define what society expects of women and what society expects of men. These images are repeated in the media, through language, and by adult role models.

Different treatment and expectations result from the differences which people observe or expect to observe between the sexes. Some of these differences are innate and determined by sex; most are culturally implanted. But since most people believe that the culturally implanted differences are sex-determined, a set of beliefs has evolved which, based on sex, prescribe the appropriate roles and behaviors of both sexes. The way we behave and expect others to behave is determined by these beliefs. The only way we can change our behavior and begin promoting educational equity is to understand these beliefs. The readings in Module 1 will help you to understand your beliefs by answering these questions:

(1) What differences between male and female human beings are determined by sex?

(2) What ideas about "maleness" and "femaleness" have we inferred from sex-determined differences?

(3) Why are these ideas unfair to both males and females?

(4) How are these ideas communicated?

Part One: What differences between male and female human beings are determined by sex?

Most of what we believe to be differences between female and male human beings derive from the physical facts: females and males have different anatomies and different reproductive responsibilities. They also develop differently and, surprisingly, exhibit some differences in brain function. But what differences in behavior are determined by biology? The answer to this question is, as yet, uncertain. Many people think certain psychological, intellectual, and behavioral traits are determined by biology. Research, while incomplete, has not confirmed their ideas.

You have been given "Innate Factors in Sex Differences" by Norma L. McCoy.[1] McCoy summarizes what is known about sex-determined differences between females and males. As you read, note that the sex differences which McCoy reports can be classified into four categories:

(1) physical differences (e.g., genitalia)

(2) innate differences in sexual behavior (e.g., lactation)

(3) differences in behavior which scientists think may have some innate basis (e.g., performance of certain quantitative skills)

(4) differences in behavior whose origins are unknown but which are likely to be culturally implanted.

It may be helpful to write down in the margins of the article whether each difference derives from: (1) physical; (2) innate; (3) possibly innate; or (4) unknown factors. Think about how the differences (regardless of origin) between males and females are encouraged or exaggerated by our society. You will have an opportunity to discuss your ideas during the next group session.

* * * * *

READ "INNATE FACTORS IN SEX DIFFERENCES"

* * * * *

Part Two: What ideas about "maleness" and "femaleness" have we inferred from the sex-determined differences?

Our beliefs about "maleness" and "femaleness," our different ways of treating boys and girls, our expectations about appropriate behavior and roles: all are based on real physical differences and differences in sexual behavior. But, evolution, environment, and rearing have tended to exaggerate and extend these sex-determined differences. For example, adult males are, on the average, stronger physically than adult females. But as McCoy suggested in the first reading:

> The apparent physical differences between mature men and women may be the result of a long period of evolution in which the male had to hunt, fight, and protect and the females had to bear and nurture young. Perhaps a male who was physically strong and recovered quickly from physical fatigue was more apt to survive and reproduce, while a woman survived and reproduced who bore a child easily.[2]

---

[1] Norma L. McCoy, "Innate Factors in Sex Differences," in Alice G. Sargent, Beyond Sex Roles (St. Paul: West Publishing Company, 1976), pp. 157-167.

[2] McCoy in Sargent, Beyond Sex Roles, p. 161.

It would seem that many of our attitudes about appropriate male and female behavior also evolved when the extra strength of a male's body was a decided advantage. When fighting mastadons, hurling spears, pulling oars, and plowing fields, "manpower"--in the literal sense--made the difference between survival and nonexistence. Womanpower--in the sense of bearing children--also determined whether the species survived. But, because men excelled in physical strength and women had to "stay home" to rear the family, men took the dominant role in society. Today there is a tendency to continue to expect men to excel in the attributes needed outside the home (intellect, for instance, and assertiveness). There is also a tendency to expect women to excel in the attributes needed inside the home for rearing a family (nurturance, compassion, etc.). Because we tend to value the attributes expected of men more than the attributes expected of women, we hold on to the idea of male superiority. Men dominate business, government, and technology. Women take care of home, children, and social obligations, and participate in artistic and humanistic endeavors. Since the expected spheres of influence differ, the illusions that males are more intelligent and that the skills are very different can be maintained.

Because we perceive their respective roles so differently, we value different attributes in men and women. Men are valued for their wisdom and intellectual achievements, which increase with age. Women, as child-bearers, are valued for their bodies, which deteriorate, by society's standards, with age. If women are valued only because they bear children or give sexual pleasure to men, then there is a direct correlation between a woman's age and the value that is placed on her. As Ambrose Bierce, the nineteenth century writer, bluntly stated, "Woman's body is the woman." As a result, we don't like old women. In Afghanistan there is a vivid proverb stating, "If you see an old man, sit down and take a lesson. If you see an old woman throw a stone." Americans are less obvious in their dislike of old females compared to old males, but we imply the same thing when we talk about grandfatherly advice as something to be respected and old wives' tales as the epitome of foolishness.

Our rules of etiquette are also based on our perception of male and female roles. Because males are expected to be physically stronger and, consequently, dominant, they are taught to open doors, give up their seats, offer their arms, walk next to the street, and carry packages for women. Traditionally the behaviors have been interpreted as showing respect, but today many people suspect condescension as the motive.

The probable reason that these ideas and behaviors have continued so long is that they simplify things. It seems easier to assign behaviors and roles along the one most obvious and equal division in nature--sex--than to react to each person and situation on an individual basis. This kind of thinking pushes us to expect the behavior of males and females to be opposites. If men are aggressive, then women are passive. Men are logical and rational; women are emotional. Men produce goods; women provide services. Men are strong; women are weak. Men are independent; women are dependent. In reality, behavior differences can better be illustrated by a continuum. Few people exhibit behavior traits at the extreme poles. Most people of both sexes have traits and characteristics which are in the middle of the

continuum. Nevertheless, we classify people by the extremes associated with their sex.

We continue to believe that women are--and should be--nurturant and gentle while men are--and should be--aggressive and assertive. Our observations of greater physical strength in males lead us to infer intellectual and emotional strength as well. Males are logical and exercise self-restraint; women emotional, even hysterical in their responses. From patterns of family behavior, we have developed the idea that males, as husbands and fathers, provide for their families. It is the "man of the house" who makes the major decisions both within and outside the home. Females, as wives and mothers, nurture the young and care for their families, but their role is decidedly secondary. This continues to be true in the world of work where high prestige jobs require "manly" attributes (risk-taking, courage, achievement motivation, power). Lower status jobs--nursing, teaching, librarianship--require "womanly" attributes: care-giving, compassion, neatness. Not incidentally, these jobs are low paying and often supervised by men.

Thus, because a person is a particular sex, we learn to expect certain physical, intellectual, and emotional traits. We also expect the person to behave appropriately and choose an appropriate adult role. All of this thinking is related to indisputable differences between the sexes. Based on these differences, we make assumptions about all kinds of differences which may or may not exist. These are the beliefs which we communicate by the way we treat boys and girls and by the images of maleness and femaleness which they observe. These are also the beliefs which shape our behavior and the behavior of others.

Part Three: Why are these beliefs unfair to both males and females?

The beliefs we have about differences between the sexes tend to be unfair for two reasons. One reason is that an individual's own identity and traits become less important than the supposed traits of the group with which she or he shares sexual identity. Most people would agree that judging a person on the basis of group membership rather than individual personality is unfair. A second reason is that the beliefs we have are also our expectations for how things ought to be. But, many females and males cannot, will not, and should not conform to those expectations. Many of our expectations about how males and females ought to behave emphasize how different the two sexes are. In reality, the sexes are much less different than we imagine. As a result it is unfair to assign such different roles and behaviors to males and females.

Even though it is unfair to expect such different roles and behaviors from males and females, we continue to do so. Often we perceive the actual differences between the sexes to be greater than they are. Then we bend our behavior (or allow our behavior to be shaped) to maximize the differences and ensure that they remain as we expect them to be. This process may be unconscious, but as soon as it occurs, the differences between males and females are maximized and the differences among males and among females are minimized. An individual's identity and traits become less important than the supposed traits of the group with which she or he shares common sex.

This situation is unfair to both men and women, but it is particularly unfair to women. The language and thoughts which get communicated through the public media are most often the language and thoughts of the people in power. In the past this has usually been the language of white males. Because the power structure has been dominated by this particular group, what has appeared on television, been recorded in dictionaries and books, and been taught in the schools has been, to a large extent, one-sided. The same one-sided images have been repeated so often that most members of both the group in power--males--and the group out of power--females--share the same beliefs. (Similar phenomena have occurred with racial and ethnic minorities: many members of these groups have accepted as true of themselves the images which have been repeated in the public media.) These beliefs are often inaccurate and they are usually unfair, sometimes even to the group in power.

Even when we recognize that the assumptions we have are unfair or untrue, we often continue to believe them. How can this be true? Macoby and Jacklin offer this explanation in The Psychology of Sex Differences:

> If a generalization about a group of people is believed, whenever a member of that group behaves in the expected way the observer notes it and his belief is confirmed and strengthened; when a member of the group behaves in a way that is not consistent with the observer's expectations, the instance is likely to pass unnoticed, and the observer's generalized belief is protected from discrimination. We believe that this well documented process occurs continually in relation to the expected and perceived behavior of males and females, and results in the perpetuation of myths that would otherwise die out under the impact of negative evidence.[3]

Think about times when you have failed to notice the individual behavior of a child and noticed instead the behaviors which conformed to how you expected the child to behave.

Part Four: How are these unfair and inaccurate ideas about the differences between men and women communicated?

As you recall, certain differences between people are determined by sex. On the basis of these differences assumptions are made about other, often unrelated, differences. These assumptions are then communicated repeatedly by our behavior toward people and by the verbal and visual images which tend to define our expectations of how people of different sexes should behave. Finally, since people believe that the differences exist, they expect others to behave accordingly. Their own behavior may also be shaped in ways which make the assumptions seem true. This continues to happen despite observable evidence which contradicts the assumption or demonstrates how unfair it is.

---

[3]E. E. Macoby and C. N. Jacklin, Psychology of Sex Differences, Stanford: University Press, 1975, p. 355.

The charts which follow show how we communicate and allow our behavior to be shaped by these false or unfair assumptions. As you study each chart, think about the process which it explains. In most cases the assumptions are communicated through the media (including advertising, literature, and instructional materials) or through our treatment of people. Assumptions about appropriate roles may also be communicated when young people observe role models. Our behavior is shaped by the assumptions when we behave as if they are true or in ways that make the assumption seem true. These are the expectations which an assumption communicates.

As you read, think about other specific examples of how the assumptions are communicated through educational practices and instructional materials. The former include differing responses to the misbehavior of boys and girls; offering "girls" courses and "boys" courses such as home economics and shop; and counseling boys and girls of similar abilities into different curricula and careers. Instructional materials transmit unfair ideas through omissions and inaccuracies in content and through verbal and visual images which seem to prescribe certain roles and behaviors. As a school librarian, you need to be sensitive both to the obvious instructional messages which children learn and to the more subtle messages which communicate what we expect of them. Add to the charts specific examples of how the assumptions are communicated. Specific examples may be found on T.V., in the newspaper, in your family's conversations, in the books you recommend...maybe even in the very words you say to the male and female students in your library. While some unfair educational practices are now forbidden by Title IX, many continue--often in newer, more subtle forms. During the next group session, specific examples which you have identified will be discussed.

INNATE SEX DIFFERENCE:	Males are physically stronger than females.
ASSUMPTION BASED ON SEX DIFFERENCE:	Because males are physically stronger, it is assumed that they will do the work--usually outside of the home--to support their families.

HOW THE ASSUMPTION IS COMMUNICATED BY THE MEDIA:

- Toy trucks, toy guns, and toy tools are marketed to little boys, while toy irons, toy brooms, and toy dishes are marketed to little girls.
- The mass media portray little boys being rewarded for such comments as, "When I grow up, I'm going to be President." Little girls are rewarded for such comments as, "When I grow up, I'm going to be a mommy."
- Problems in mathematics books show boys figuring out measurements for building highways, going to the moon, and crossing oceans. They show girls figuring out measurements for making brownies, buying a yard of cloth, and sticking to a budget.
- Cars, sports equipment, and hobby items are marketed to teenage boys, while silverware, china, and diamond rings are marketed to teenage girls.

INNATE SEX DIFFERENCE:	Males are physically stronger than females.
ASSUMPTION BASED ON SEX DIFFERENCE:	Because males are physically stronger, it is assumed that they will do the work--usually outside of the home--to support their families.

HOW SEGREGATION IS SHAPED TO SUPPORT THE ASSUMPTION:

- While still in elementary school, boys are given industrial arts classes while girls are given home economics classes.
- Women are not given training to prepare them for a career outside the home.
- Men are encouraged to work by being given extra benefits and extra pay. For example, in teaching men are often given increment raises for length of service by counting years spent in military service as though it were teaching.
- Because it is difficult to obtain good or even adequate child care, many women who want to work outside the home do not.

INNATE SEX DIFFERENCE: Males are physically stronger than females.

ASSUMPTION BASED ON SEX DIFFERENCE: Because males are physically stronger, it is assumed that they will do the work--usually outside of the home--to support their families.

WHY THE ASSUMPTION IS UNFAIR OR UNTRUE:

- In addition to household responsibilities, 36 million American women work outside the home, including:

  -- 24 million married women
  -- 13.6 million women with children under 18
  -- 4.8 million women with preschool children
  -- 54% of all women between the ages of 18 and 64

- One of ten women are heads of families; one of five minority women are heads of families. Forty percent of the civilian labor force is women, including:

  -- 82% of librarians
  -- 85% of elementary teachers
  -- 89% of bookkeepers
  -- 92% of bank tellers
  -- 98% of registered nurses
  -- 99% of secretaries

- Ninety percent of all women work outside the home at some time.

  -- Married women work for an average of 25 years.
  -- Single women work for an average of 45 years.

- In divided families, fathers often contribute less than one-half of the financial support.

- The responsibilities and expectations assigned to males may be related to their shorter life expectancy, greater incidence of emotional problems in childhood and high incidence of stress-related physical disorders (e.g., ulcers and cardiovascular disease).

INNATE SEX DIFFERENCE: Males are physically stronger than females.

ASSUMPTION BASED ON SEX DIFFERENCE: Because males are physically stronger, it is assumed they are emotionally stronger too. They are trusted with important decisions (women are too emotional) and provide emotional support for women.

HOW THE ASSUMPTION IS COMMUNICATED BY THE MEDIA:

- Children's stories show girls, but not boys, becoming frightened.
- Science books nearly always show snakes, insects, and other potentially dangerous animals being handled by males.
- In situations of danger, illustrators show males going bravely forward while females cower behind.
- Cartoons and jokes show women standing on chairs and screaming when a mouse runs across the floor.
- Newspaper pictures taken during crises often show a man comforting a woman. For example, if a child is lost the father bravely puts his arms around the sobbing mother.

INNATE SEX DIFFERENCE: Males are physically stronger than females.

ASSUMPTION BASED ON SEX DIFFERENCE: Because males are physically stronger, it is assumed they are emotionally stronger too. They are trusted with important decisions (women are too emotional) and provide emotional support for women.

HOW THE BEHAVIOR IS SHAPED TO SUPPORT THE ASSUMPTION:

- Boys are taught not to cry, girls are permitted to show their emotions.
- Boys are encouraged to be strong, silent types who keep their feelings to themselves.
- Girls are taught that it is feminine to "lean on a boy for support." It makes him feel "big and strong and manly."
- Males are drafted into armies and given training in combat and "bravery."
- Males are taught that it is unmanly to need help. Hence men resist seeking psychological help.

INNATE SEX DIFFERENCE: Males are physically stronger than females.

ASSUMPTION BASED ON SEX DIFFERENCE: Because males are physically stronger, it is assumed they are emotionally stronger too. They are trusted with important decisions (women are too emotional) and provide emotional support for women.

WHY THE ASSUMPTION IS UNFAIR OR UNTRUE:

- Men commit suicide twice as often as women. Women, however, admit themselves to inpatient and outpatient psychiatric care more frequently than men. This may relate to our expectation that men "hide" their emotions and women show theirs.

- Men suffer a higher incidence of stress-related diseases than women, including:

  -- two times as many ulcers
  -- most of the fatal heart attacks

INNATE SEX DIFFERENCE: Women's bodies produce babies as well as the milk to nurture them during infancy.

ASSUMPTION BASED ON SEX DIFFERENCE: Because of this early relationship between mother and child, it is assumed that women's natural abilities and instincts relate to child bearing and child rearing. Consequently, mothers should have primary responsibility for raising their children. This should fulfill their creative instincts.

The best jobs for women--if they must work--are motherlike in being nurturant and service-oriented (for example, waitresses, nurses, teachers, airplane hostesses, librarians, and telephone operators).

HOW THE ASSUMPTION IS COMMUNICATED BY THE MEDIA:

- A comparison of the meanings of "to father" and "to mother" shows a difference in attitude. It takes a lifetime "to mother a child" but it takes only ten minutes "to father a child."
- Pictures in books show mothers taking care of children much more often than they show fathers taking care of children.
- The marketing of dolls to little girls stresses their future role as mother. It does not seem to occur to anyone that for every little girl who is growing up to be a mother, there is also a little boy who is growing up to be a father.
- The mass media portray predominantly women as waitresses, nurses, librarians, and elementary school teachers. Also it does not portray women in a variety of other roles.
- Guidance materials used with young people show service jobs as appropriate for females, while creative, assertive, and investigative jobs are shown as appropriate for males.

INNATE SEX DIFFERENCE: Women's bodies produce babies as well as the milk to nurture them during infancy.

ASSUMPTION BASED ON SEX DIFFERENCE: Because of this early relationship between mother and child, it is assumed that women's natural abilities and instincts relate to child bearing and child rearing. Consequently, mothers should have primary responsibility for raising their children. This should fulfill their creative instincts.

The best jobs for women--if they must work--are motherlike in being nurturant and service-oriented (for example, waitresses, nurses, teachers, airplane hostesses, librarians, and telephone operators).

HOW BEHAVIOR IS SHAPED TO SUPPORT THE ASSUMPTION:

- Girls and young women are encouraged to learn and practice domestic roles ("playing house" in kindergarten; home economics in later years). Boys get little or no training in child care.
- Girls are taught to enjoy serving other people. They are taught to smile and be gracious.
- Women are welcomed into service-oriented jobs while they are discouraged from high pressure jobs or from jobs requiring creativity. The pay in service jobs is low so that men who can get higher paying jobs do not apply.
- Women are not encouraged or given training for such creative roles as composers and conductors or directors and producers.
- Women, but not men, are allowed to take maternity leave to stay home and care for a new baby.
- At least until recently, when a couple divorced, the mother was almost automatically given custody of the children.

INNATE SEX DIFFERENCE: Women's bodies produce babies as well as the milk to nurture them during infancy.

ASSUMPTION BASED ON SEX DIFFERENCE: Because of this early relationship between mother and child, it is assumed that women's natural abilities and instincts relate to child bearing and child rearing. Consequently, mothers should have primary responsibility for raising their children. This should fulfill their creative instincts.

The best jobs for women--if they must work--are motherlike in being nurturant and service-oriented (for example, waitresses, nurses, teachers, airplane hostesses, librarians, and telephone operators).

WHY THE ASSUMPTION IS UNFAIR OR UNTRUE:

- The employment that many people consider to be appropriate for women includes jobs that pay less than jobs that are "appropriate" for men.
- Regardless of "natural abilities and instincts," 90 percent of all women work outside the home at some time. Two-thirds of the women who work perform low-paid clerical, service, or factory jobs.

INNATE SEX DIFFERENCE: Males are physically stronger than females.

ASSUMPTION BASED ON SEX DIFFERENCE: Because males are stronger, it is assumed that they are intellectually stronger too. We expect men to make important decisions, hold supervisory roles, and be smarter than their wives.

HOW THE ASSUMPTION IS COMMUNICATED BY THE MEDIA:

- School materials frequently show pictures of males in concentrated thought, while females are shown doing trivial tasks or just watching.
- Inventions and accomplishments of men are featured in history books that relate those events such as wars that the male power structure views as important. Women's accomplishments and contributions are neglected.
- Female authors from George Sand through S. E. Hinton find that they get more respect if they go by a masculine sounding pen name or initials. Unfortunately this perpetuates the idea that women cannot write.
- Our literary heritage (The Bible, the old folktales, etc.) is full of references to "wise old men" and "foolish old women." Compare the connotations of "grandfatherly advice" and "old wives' tales."
- On television commercials, the authoritative voice-over (the person who gives the final recommendation for a product) is nearly always a male voice. This gives the impression that males are the ones who know about everything--even about kitchen products and personal hygiene products for women.

INNATE SEX DIFFERENCE: Males are physically stronger than females.

ASSUMPTION BASED ON SEX DIFFERENCE: Because males are stronger, it is assumed that they are intellectually stronger too. We expect men to make important decisions, hold supervisory roles, and be smarter than their wives.

HOW BEHAVIOR IS SHAPED TO SUPPORT THE ASSUMPTION:

- Girls are taught to let boys win and to "play dumb."
- Girls and women let boys and men decide on the subjects of conversation. They try to talk about "his interests" which means that many of their questions are genuinely naive.
- Men go to school longer and take "heavier" subjects.
- Females are not given opportunities for practicing leadership roles. They are taught to be dependent rather than assertive in decision making.
- Men marry women who are younger and therefore have not had as much time to "get smart."
- Men generally have stimulating jobs in which their thinking powers continue to be developed throughout adulthood. Women often have dull, routine jobs in which they get little practice developing their minds. Also, women working at home have less intellectual stimulation from other adults.

INNATE SEX DIFFERENCE: Males are physically stronger than females.

ASSUMPTION BASED ON SEX DIFFERENCE: Because males are stronger, it is assumed that they are intellectually stronger too. We expect men to make important decisions, hold supervisory roles, and be smarter than their wives.

WHY THE ASSUMPTION IS UNFAIR OR UNTRUE:

- Numerous studies have been undertaken to discover what and how much difference exists between males and females in intellectual ability and learning styles. Many of these studies are summarized in Macoby and Jacklin's The Psychology of Sex Differences.[4] This table (adapted from Macoby and Jacklin) shows some of what has been discovered.

		Who Showed More Ability?		
What Was Studied?	How Many Studies?	No Difference	Males	Females
Perceptual motor ability	20	15	0	5
Paired associate learning	17	16	0	1
Discrimination learning	30	23	2	5
Incidental learning	12	7	0	5
Probability learning	14	11	2	1
General intellectual ability	58	40	3	15
Reasoning	38	26	7	5
School performance	12	5	1	6

- An analysis of research studies indicates that females are not intellectually weaker, although they score lower on certain tests, particularly those of quantitative ability. Males, on the other hand, score lower on tests of verbal ability. Nevertheless, females are less confident and, after puberty, less motivated to achieve. Macoby and Jacklin report the following research.

Confidence in task performance	15	4	11	0
Achievement striving (ages 3-12)	12	8	0	4
Achievement striving (ages 12-20)	11	6	4	1

- Many feminists feel women lack confidence and are less achievement-oriented because they have been told so often that they are less capable and less important than men.

[4] Psychology of Sex Differences, pp. 17-163, passim.

INNATE SEX DIFFERENCE: Males and females are born with different genitalia.

ASSUMPTION BASED ON SEX DIFFERENCE: Because of this one basic difference, it is assumed that the ideal male has characteristics opposite to those of the ideal female. Thus we expect males to be tough, active, big and strong. Girls should be gentle, passive, little and weak.

HOW THE ASSUMPTION IS COMMUNICATED BY THE MEDIA:

- In children's books, boys are nearly always pictured as being bigger than girls even though in real life female children are usually bigger than male children.
- Girls who act "tough" are labeled "tomboys," even though a majority of girls sometimes act this way.
- In mathematics books, for example, children are segregated by sex to form sets of boys playing baseball, girls sewing, boys with cars, girls with dolls, etc.
- Advertisements show the undesirability of a man being "a 98-pound weakling." Other advertisements stress the desirability of smallness for women by showing before-and-after pictures of dieters.
- Photographers taking family portraits use stools and cushions and blocks to insure that the men look taller than the women.

INNATE SEX DIFFERENCE: Males and females are born with different genitalia.

ASSUMPTION BASED ON SEX DIFFERENCE: Because of this one basic difference, it is assumed that the ideal male has characteristics opposite to those of the ideal female. Thus we expect males to be tough, active, big and strong. Girls should be gentle, passive, little and weak.

HOW THE BEHAVIOR IS SHAPED TO SUPPORT THE ASSUMPTION:

- Male infants are dressed in blue; female infants in pink.
- Studies show that parents are more gentle with infant girls than with infant boys. Little girls are nursed and cuddled more than are little boys.
- Little boys are dressed in tough coveralls; little girls in dainty dresses. These clothes strongly influence the kind of activity the child engages in.
- Girls are reminded to "act like a lady" (quiet, neat, gentle); boys to "act like a man" (unemotional, physically strong, tough).
- Boys are trained in physical sports and given weight-lifting sets to increase their size. Girls are put on diets and given reducing exercises to decrease their size.
- Girls participate in major school activities as supporters and decorations (pom pom girl, cheerleader, dance teams). Boys participate in central, active roles requiring strength and toughness (football, wrestling, etc.).
- As a token acknowledgment that males and females are different, shirts for males are made to button left side over right while blouses for females button right side over left.

INNATE SEX DIFFERENCE:	Males and females are born with different genitalia.
ASSUMPTION BASED ON SEX DIFFERENCE:	Because of this one basic difference, it is assumed that the ideal male has characteristics opposite to those of the ideal female. Thus we expect males to be tough, active, big and strong. Girls should be gentle, passive, little and weak.

WHY THE ASSUMPTION IS UNFAIR OR UNTRUE:

- Many people cannot or should not (for reasons of mental and physical health) conform to these extremes of behavior.
- Most people, if judged as individuals, would be toward the middle of the continuum rather than at the extreme ends.

INNATE SEX DIFFERENCE:	Women, but not men, become pregnant as a result of sexual intercourse.
ASSUMPTION BASED ON SEX DIFFERENCE:	Because the women must be the guardian of her womb, it is assumed that she will be the one to set the limits of sexual behavior and the man will play the opposite role of sexual aggressor. This suggests a "war of the sexes" with males fighting for sex and excitement and females fighting for love and security. A woman should be sexually attractive so that she can choose a mate from among those who are pursuing her. Men are free to make contact with whomever they wish.

HOW THE ASSUMPTION IS COMMUNICATED BY THE MEDIA:

- Illustrations of girls and women are often included for their decorative value or sex appeal.
- Girls and women are referred to by "cute" animal terminology which emphasizes sexual attractiveness (bunny, kitten, chick). Ugly or unappealing females are cows or dogs.
- Sexual language emphasizes male dominance (take her virginity, screw her).
- Boys and men are stereotyped in literature as sexually aggressive.
- Language and literature devalues women who are older, hence, less sexually attractive (old crow, old hag).
- Texts and reference materials include unnecessary comments about the appearance and clothing of girls and women.
- Women and girls are pictured and described as paying much more attention to their appearances than do men and boys.

INNATE SEX DIFFERENCE: Women, but not men, become pregnant as a result of sexual intercourse.

ASSUMPTION BASED ON SEX DIFFERENCE: Because the woman must be the guardian of her womb, it is assumed that she will be the one to set the limits of sexual behavior and the man will play the opposite role of sexual aggressor. This suggests a "war of the sexes" with males fighting for sex and excitement and females fighting for love and security. A woman should be sexually attractive so that she can choose a mate from among those who are pursuing her. Men are free to make contact with whomever they wish.

HOW THE BEHAVIOR IS SHAPED TO SUPPORT THE ASSUMPTION:

- At least until very recently, courting procedures dictated that males make all the advances. "Nice girls" do not telephone boys or ask them out on dates.
- Men pay the most money for courting expenses. Women pay the most for clothes and grooming aids designed to make them sexually attractive.
- Males and females are segregated from each other in most areas of work and play. They do not get to know each other or to become friends except as sexual partners.

INNATE SEX DIFFERENCE: Women, but not men, become pregnant as a result of sexual intercourse.

ASSUMPTION BASED ON SEX DIFFERENCE: Because the woman must be the guardian of her womb, it is assumed that she will be the one to set the limits of sexual behavior and the man will play the opposite role of sexual aggressor. This suggests a "war of the sexes" with males fighting for sex and excitement and females fighting for love and security. A woman should be sexually attractive so that she can choose a mate from among those who are pursuing her. Men are free to make contact with whomever they wish.

WHY THE ASSUMPTION IS UNFAIR OR UNTRUE:

- It is obviously unfair that only one sex be given the initiative in setting up potential partnerships. This kind of role assignment limits human potential.
- The love and marriage relationships are extremely complex. Partners are at a disadvantage in establishing the necessarily cooperative attitudes when in the first twenty years of their lives they have been taught that relationships with the opposite sex should be competitive power struggles.